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Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Glauco **Seoane** (Peru)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 19 (see A/71/463, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 20th and 28th meetings, on 24 October and 8 December 2016. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records.[1]

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/71/L.17 and A/C.2/71/L.51

2. At the 20th meeting, on 24 October, the representative of Thailand, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/71/L.17).

3. At its 28th meeting, on 8 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/71/L.51), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ignacio Díaz de la Guardia (Spain), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.17.

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 11 parts, under the symbols A/71/463, A/71/463/Add.1, A/71/463/Add.2, A/71/463/Add.3, A/71/463/Add.4, A/71/463/Add.5, A/71/463/Add.6, A/71/463/Add.7, A/71/463/Add.8, A/71/463/Add.9 and A/71/463/Add.10.

[1] A/C.2/71/SR.20 and A/C.2/71/SR.28.

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4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.51 had no programme budget implications.

5. Also at the same meeting, the co-facilitator of the draft resolution (France) made a statement and orally corrected draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.51.[2]

6. Also at its 28th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.51, as orally corrected (see para. 8).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.51, as orally corrected, draft resolution A/C.2/71/L.17 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

[2] A/C.2/71/SR.28.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008, 64/73 of 7 December 2009, 65/159 of 20 December 2010, 66/200 of 22 December 2011, 67/210 of 21 December 2012, 68/212 of 20 December 2013, 69/220 of 19 December 2014 and 70/205 of 22 December 2015, and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of humankind,

Recalling also in full the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] and the Paris Agreement, adopted under the Convention,[2] acknowledging that they are the primary international, intergovernmental forums for negotiating the global response to climate change, expressing determination to address decisively the threat posed by climate change and environmental degradation, recognizing that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible international cooperation aimed at accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions and addressing adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change, and noting with concern the significant gap between the aggregate effect of parties' mitigation pledges in terms of global annual emissions of greenhouse gases by 2020 and aggregate emission pathways,

Recalling further the Paris Agreement which, pursuant to article 2.2 thereof, will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances,

Noting with appreciation the high-level signature ceremony for the Paris Agreement, held on 22 April 2016, and the high-level event for the entry into force of the Agreement, held on 21 September 2016,

Acknowledging that action on adaptation to climate change is an urgent priority for developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and bearing in mind that the provision of scaled-up financial resources should aim to achieve a balance between adaptation and mitigation,

Welcoming the convening of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

to the Kyoto Protocol and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016, and welcoming also the Marrakech Action Proclamation,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[4] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[5] the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6] the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[7] the outcomes of the thirteenth to twenty-first sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and of the third to eleventh sessions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011,[8] the Political Declaration adopted by the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 27 to 29 May 2016,[9] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[10] the Mauritius Declaration[11] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[12] the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,[13] the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,[14] the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[15]

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[3] Resolution 55/2.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] Resolution 60/1.

[7] Resolution 66/288, annex.

[8] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. II.

[9] Resolution 70/294, annex.

[10] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[11] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[12] Ibid., annex II.

[13] Resolution 69/15, annex.

[14] Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

[15] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Taking note of the Green Climate Fund and its successful and timely initial resource mobilization process, making it the largest dedicated climate fund, and its approval of 1.17 billion United States dollars in funding as a milestone towards achieving the aspirational goal of approving 2.5 billion United States dollars in funding, which will help to deliver outcomes, in developing countries, to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, and reiterating the objectives and guiding principles of the Fund, including a gender-sensitive approach in its process and operations,

Noting the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation at all levels among the parties to and secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[16] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[17] as appropriate, while respecting their individual mandates,

Noting also the contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to address the challenge of, inter alia, climate change, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders,

Recognizing the substantial risks posed by climate change to the oceans and marine ecosystems, and in this regard noting the convening of the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolutions 70/226 of 22 December 2015 and 70/303 of 9 September 2016, to be held in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017,

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[16] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[17] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

Taking note of the decision of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization at its thirty-ninth session to implement, as part of a comprehensive basket of measures, a global market-based measure in the form of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation to address annual increases in total carbon dioxide emissions from international civil aviation above 2020 levels, taking into account special circumstances and respective capabilities,

Welcoming the recent adoption, at the twenty-eighth meeting of the parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer,[18] of the amendment, as agreed in Kigali, to phase down hydrofluorocarbons, as a major contribution to the aims of the Paris Agreement,

1. *Reaffirms* that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, expresses profound alarm that the emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise globally, remains deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing an increase in such impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, further threatening food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and in this regard emphasizes that mitigation of and adaptation to climate change represent an immediate and urgent global priority;

2. *Welcomes* the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hosted by the Government of France in Paris from 30 November to 13 December 2015;

3. *Also welcomes* the early entry into force, on 4 November 2016, of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[2] and encourages all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible;

4. *Recalls* that the Paris Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change, increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production, and making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development;

5. *Welcomes* the nationally determined contributions submitted to date, and recalls that the regular updating of such contributions should reflect the highest possible level of ambition, in the light of different national circumstances, and

[18] Ibid., vol. 1522, No. 26369.

provide the information necessary for clarity, transparency and understanding, in accordance with the relevant decisions;

6. *Acknowledges* the work undertaken by the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, and encourages non-party stakeholders to scale up their efforts to address and respond to climate change;

7. *Reiterates* the resolve of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of its decision 1/CP.19,[19] to accelerate the full implementation of the decisions constituting the agreed outcome pursuant to its decision 1/CP.13[20] and to enhance ambition in the pre-2020 period in order to ensure the highest possible mitigation efforts under the Convention by all parties;

8. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;[21]

9. *Recognizes* the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, and in that regard takes note of decisions 2/CP.19[19] and 2/CP.20[22] adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, on the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, and decision 1/CP.21,[23] in which the Paris Agreement was adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-first session;

10. *Notes with appreciation* the hosting by the Government of Morocco of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, in Marrakech from 7 to 18 November 2016;

11. *Welcomes* the offer by the Government of Fiji to host the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in Bonn, Germany, in 2017;

12. *Urges* Member States, taking into account that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by climate change owing to gender inequalities and the dependence of many women on natural resources for their livelihoods, to promote the integration of a gender perspective into environmental and climate change policies and to strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources towards achieving the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, and stresses the need to address the challenges posed by climate change that affect women and girls in particular;

13. *Welcomes* the appointment of the new Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and congratulates the previous Executive Secretary for her achievements;

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[19] See FCCC/CP/2013/10/Add.1.
[20] See FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1.
[21] A/71/216, sect. I.
[22] See FCCC/CP/2014/10/Add.2.
[23] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1.

14. *Recalls* its request that the Secretary-General, as a follow-up to paragraph 96 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",[7] submit an action plan for the Secretariat that will be designed to work within existing procurement rules and policies aimed at integrating sustainable development practices into its operations and facilities management, building on existing efforts and promoting cost-effectiveness, and in accordance with legislative frameworks, including financial rules and regulations, while maintaining accountability to Member States, with the specific goal of a United Nations that does not, through its operations or facilities management, have a negative impact on the climate, as soon as possible, or by 2020, if practicable, and requests that the aforementioned action plan be submitted before the end of its seventy-first session;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019;

16. *Invites* the secretariat of the Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, unless otherwise agreed.